

REIMBURSE CORPORATION OF GEORGETOWN CERTAIN MONEYS.

[To accompany Bill H. R. No. 679.]

APRIL 20, 1860.

MR. CARTER, from the Committee for the District of Columbia, made the following

REPORT.

The Committee for the District of Columbia have had under consideration the bill "to reimburse the corporation of Georgetown, in the District of Columbia, a sum of money advanced towards the construction of the Little Falls bridge," and beg to submit the following "report," prepared by Mr. Goode, during the thirty-fifth Congress, concurring in the same :

In the month of March, 1853, the sum of thirty thousand dollars was appropriated by Congress for the construction of a bridge over the Potomac river, at a point known as the Little Falls, and the work was placed in process of construction, under the direction of George Thom, captain in corps of topographical engineers.

In the fall of 1853, when the work had been prosecuted near to completion, the appropriation was found to be exhausted—the sum of thirty thousand dollars having been expended—and it became necessary to suspend operations until other funds could be procured applicable to the object.

It was supposed that several months must pass before an additional appropriation could be expected from Congress ; and the abandonment of the work, in an unfinished condition, at the approach of winter, must expose it to serious injury, whilst its suspension would involve a necessity for a sale of the stock on hand, by which the government would suffer a heavy loss. To avoid these evils, the officer in charge, on consultation with the Secretary of the Interior, applied to the corporate authorities of Georgetown to advance a sum of five thousand dollars, which would enable him to continue his operations, and carry forward the bridge to a condition in which it might be used for travel during the then following winter. This proposition was acceded to, and, by several acts of the corporation, the sum of five thousand eight hundred dollars was placed to the credit and subject to the order of

Captain Thom, to be expended in the construction of the Little Falls bridge, his assurance being given, with the consent of the Secretary of the Interior, that the amount should be reimbursed to the corporation of Georgetown when the further appropriation should be made by Congress. It also appears that some lien on the stock on hand was executed in favor of the corporation of Georgetown, as a security for the reimbursement of the amount advanced; but it is believed that nothing was realized by the corporation from this lien, the entire stock having been applied to the uses of government.

In August, 1854, Congress appropriated a further sum of fifteen thousand dollars for completing the bridge; but a serious accident had befallen it, which created a necessity for the appropriation of a large sum, and the corporation of Georgetown postponed its claim for immediate payment, unwilling to delay the completion of the work; accordingly, the sum of thirteen thousand eight hundred dollars, part of the appropriation of fifteen thousand dollars, was applied towards the completion of the bridge, leaving a balance of twelve hundred dollars, which was applied towards the payment of the sum of five thousand eight hundred dollars, leaving the sum of four thousand six hundred dollars due to the corporation of Georgetown; for the payment of which a bill is herewith reported.